



## Welcome

The leadership of the Governor's Council on Economic Competitiveness and Technology has recognized the importance of regular communication among Council members. This is the first of regular monthly updates you will receive on key issues. CERC is handling production of this newsletter, so please send your suggestions and comments to Marketing Manager Lauren Kyle at [lkyle@cerc.com](mailto:lkyle@cerc.com), or call 860-571-6203.

## Advisory Group Developing Bradley Recommendations

Several independent studies conducted since late 1998 have agreed: the economic future of the Hartford/ Springfield corridor hinges on Bradley International Airport becoming a truly best-in-class transportation hub.

After learning the results of the most recent study - by Schiphol Project Consult - the Governor's Council, at its Dec. 15 meeting, called for the formation of a Bradley Advisory Group. That group - comprised of top business leaders, officials from the Department of Transportation, the Department of Economic and Community Development and key legislators - is charged with building on DOT's recent successes and recommending steps to transform Bradley into a world-class airport.

The Bradley Advisory Group's primary role is to recommend a governance and management structure for Bradley that will enable it to meet the challenges of the coming decades. Members are considering a strategic plan for Bradley and examining major projects currently underway at the facility. The group has met twice so far and will submit recommendations to the governor and the General Assembly by the end of February.

Meetings have generated intense discussion and debate about the best course of action, as all the participants are keenly aware that the recommendations will have a profound effect on the Hartford/Springfield area for years to come. "In the emerging global age Bradley must initiate an 'entrepreneurial' market-driven strategic posture in directing its future or run the risk of being overwhelmed by the New York and Boston air markets," according to Michael Gallis, author of a recent report on Bradley International Airport titled "Establishing the Context: Global to Regional."

## Urban Strategy Nearly Complete

The Connecticut Inner City Business Strategy, a comprehensive plan to bring unprecedented economic opportunity to residents of

Connecticut's inner cities, will be presented to the governor and legislative leaders in late February.

The strategy is a three-year, multi-faceted effort aimed at improving the economic competitiveness of Connecticut's inner cities, their residents and their businesses. It will focus on practical programs to develop skilled inner city workers and entrepreneurs; provide financial incentives to attract and retain inner city businesses; forge links between urban industries and regional clusters; and improve the image of the inner cities.

The proposal will include a statewide plan as well as individual plans for each of the five targeted cities: Bridgeport, Hartford, New Britain, New Haven and Waterbury.

The plan is the result of six months of intensive research by more than 200 business, civic and community leaders working in cooperation with the nonprofit Initiative for a Competitive Inner City (ICIC).

"The ICIC approach differs radically from conventional urban revitalization efforts," says Hartford City Champion Arthur Marquardt, President and CEO, CTG Resources. "It's based on hard data and sound economic principals. We're confident that the resulting plan can play a central role in making Connecticut's inner cities centers of economic activity and opportunity."

# New Business Training Networks Launched



The Connecticut Business Training Networks program awarded two more exploratory grants in December, bringing to five the number of networks funded since the program was launched in May 1999.

The most recent grants were made to the Fairfield County Information Technology Consortium and the Automotive Training Collaborative, based east of Hartford.

"In some cases, companies in a network are head-to-head competitors," says Judy Resnick, director of the CBTN program. "Yet they realize that it's important for them to work collaboratively - that you get more creative and generate better ideas by including other people in the process."

## **Metal Education Training Alliance (META) 10 metal fabrication manufacturers in Bridgeport**

Members have met and established a steering committee to set direction for the program. The committee will work with the Bridgeport Economic Resource Center. Howard Huelsman, president and general manager of Casco Products, has agreed to champion the group's efforts.

## **Spring Training in Connecticut Five spring manufacturers in Bristol**

In the process of assessing technical training requirements, this group discovered that employees needed to better understand the connection between their day-to-day work and the ultimate success or failure of their companies. The network is addressing this by developing a "Business 101" course for employees that will cover business basics, profit-and-loss issues, affect of daily activities on the bottom line and more.

## **Fairfield County Information Technology Consortium Eight IT companies from Southwestern CT**

This group, which met for the first time on Jan. 19, has engaged a consultant to help assess training needs common to member companies. The group plans to identify skill sets required for positions in the greatest demand, identify the best training resource for their needs and develop a certification process for key positions in their industry.

## **Housatonic Education for Advanced Technology (HEAT) Seven electronics manufacturers in Danbury**

This group was already a dues-based collaborative when it applied to the program. They've used accumulated dues to hire a program coordinator, and are now working with a consultant on job profiling at all member companies. Profiling will determine skills and competencies required to succeed in key jobs, thus helping to ensure that training programs are correctly aligned with employment needs.

## **Automotive Training Collaborative Five automobile dealers east of Hartford**

This network has done national research to benchmark qualities and skills associated with outstanding automobile sales representatives. They have administered skills-assessment tests to their top people to identify key characteristics, and will use the findings to develop marketing and training programs.